

THE  
NECESSITY

O F

Providing another and more Severe

L A W,

F O R T H E

More Effectual Suppressing

P R O F A N E

*Cursing and Swearing.*

In a LETTER to the Right Honourable

WILLIAM BROMLEY, *Esq;*

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By NATHANIEL COLLIER, *A. M.*

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L O · N · D O N :

Printed for R. KNAPLOCK, at the Bishop's-  
Head in St. Paul's-Church-yard. 1720.



THE  
UNIVERSITY  
OF CAMBRIDGE

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FOR THE  
MORAL AND  
POLITICAL

SCIENCE  
OF THE  
HUMAN MIND

AND  
THE  
HISTORY OF  
THE HUMAN MIND

AND  
THE  
HISTORY OF  
THE HUMAN MIND



*Honoured SIR,*



**I**N matters which concern the Welfare of our Civil Establishment, there have never been wanting those, who either out of a disinterested Zeal for the Publick Good, or in hopes of promoting their private Interest, have taken the Liberty to communicate their Thoughts to the World; and to put their Superiors in mind of the Power and Trust reposed in them, for the Security or better Preservation of the Community. Some have drawn Schemes for the Regulation of the Coin; Others for the Reducing the publick Debts; and again Others for the Enlargement or Security of our Trade in general, or in particular Branches of it: And perhaps all these have in their several

performances given better proof of their Inclination, than of their Skill to serve their Country.

IT is therefore hoped the like Zeal for the Welfare of the Publick, as we are a Religious Society, will be my Excuse for offering an Argument of a moral Nature to the Consideration of all that love our CHURCH, or have any Sense of Religion: Who, if they are at all acquainted with the State of the Nation, as to Morals, must see the Necessity there is for the Legislative Authority to interpose, and put a Stop to that prodigious Increase of Profaneness and Blasphemy, which is every Day heard in our Streets, by some more effectual Law than any yet provided against it.

AND tho' there be several Kinds of Blasphemy, which loudly call for the Censure and Animadversion of our Governors; yet do I know of none more provoking in the Sight of GOD, because none more common among almost all Ranks, and even all Ages of Men, from that of gray Hairs down to that of Childhood and Youth, than profane Cursing and Swearing. A melancholy Consideration this! and enough sure to justify the Fears of the most Phlegmatick, of Divine Vengeance hanging over  
our





our Heads. And therefore I cannot think it an unuseful Undertaking, to shew how much it is the Interest as well as the Duty of our Superiors, vigorously to exert themselves in the Suppressing of these detestable Sins; And, if the Laws already made are insufficient for this good End, to make a new one that may do it effectually. I presume that no Body will be against any such Law; because I never heard that Oaths in common Discourse proceeded from *Conscience*: Unless perhaps they should be alledg'd as an Argument of *Sincerity*, and for that Reason entitled to the Benefit of a Toleration.

WHEREFORE taking it for granted, that a Law for the more effectual Suppressing profane Cursing and Swearing, would be opposed by none but Libertines and Free-Thinkers; I shall make it my Business to prove, with all the Deference and Humility of a private Subject, that such a Law is wanting, and that there is a Necessity it should be provided; in order to avert the Divine Vengeance, which we have otherwise so much Cause to expect. And for this End, I could not think, Sir, of a better Way of offering my Thoughts to the Publick, than under the Protection of your Name, who are upon all Occasions so ready to vindicate the Honour of G O D, and  
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to discourage by your good Example the Profanation of his Name.

IT would be foreign to my Design to enter upon the Arguments, which Divines so frequently urge from the Pulpit, against the Sins of Cursing and Swearing; and which likewise have no less faithfully been insisted on by them, in that Variety of Treatises published for the Instruction of the common People: Which it is to be hoped, will be allowed as a sufficient Proof of their not being wanting in their Care of Souls. But sad Experience may abundantly convince us, of the Weakness of Argument to subdue the Strength of wicked Habits: And therefore we sue to the Civil Power to supply the Deficiency by their Authority, and so to make our Labours more successful in this Respect.

'TIS true, We have Two Laws in our Statute-Books against profane Swearing and Cursing; the latter whereof made in the Reign of King *William*, and now in Force, is so small an Improvement of the former made in that of King *James I*, that wicked Men are under no Fears from what they may suffer by this Law. A slight pecuniary Mulct of Twelve-pence an Oath upon common and mean Offenders, and Two-shillings upon others, only doubled  
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and trebled, if the Crime be so often repeated, is the highest Penalty the *Act* inflicts; and where that Mulct cannot be had, the sitting an Hour or two in the Stocks, if the Offender be of Age, and if not, the being whip'd. But that this *Act* is by no means adequate to the End for which it was made, we need no better Proof, than the prodigious Increase of that horrible Profaneness thereby condemned. I am willing to hope that those who are in high Stations, may not be sufficiently sensible of the Degeneracy and Corruption of those beneath them. But we that move in a lower Sphere, cannot be ignorant, unless we designedly stop our Ears, how shamefully and unworthily the Sacred Name of GOD is daily and hourly blasphemed, not only by the profess'd and avow'd Enemies of GOD and Religion, but by the inconsiderate Rashness of careless and unthinking Offenders.

WE are told, truly no doubt, That in the Primitive Times it was usual for the Countryman in the Field, to divert the Toil of the Day by singing of *Psalms*: But the Musick now more frequently heard among those that attend upon their Cattle or the Plough, is the harsh Noise of Oaths and Curses. A sad Proof how much more brutish the Ploughman is become than  
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his Horses, or the Herdsman than the Ox, or the Ass. And for the City, 'tis impossible for any one that passes the Streets, not to hear the outrageous Affronts continually offered to the Majesty of GOD, by the very Dregs of the People. Archbishop *Tillotson* says, " Not only by the Tribe " that wear Liveries, but by those that " go before them, and should give better " Example." And we may well enough renew the Complaint, and add with him, " That such horrid and blasphemous Oaths " and Curses are enough, if we were guilty of no other Sin, to sink a Nation." But if we pass from the City to the Camp, the Horror increases, in proportion to the greater Profanation of GOD's dreadful Name there to be heard. However, we may less wonder at this, since the Degeneracy is grown so universal, that even the Boys at play cannot but put any one that observes them in mind of the Language of Hell; so soon do they begin to defy their Maker; and by the early Habits of Wickedness learnt in their Childhood, treasure up unto themselves Vengeance against the Day of Wrath; For as much as the Strength of these Habits increases with their Age, and shews itself in almost all the Circumstances and Occurrences of Life; in their Mirth and in their Anger, in their sober as well as drunken Hours, in their grave

as

as well as their merry Discourse, when they are neither heated with Passion nor Wine. *And shall not God visit for these Things? Shall not his Soul be avenged on such a Nation as this?* Where tho' there be a Law in Force against these crying Impieties, yet has it so small an Effect, that the common Practise could scarce be worse, were there none.

AND therefore methinks our Governors should consider a little the dreadful Judgments hanging over our Heads, which must at last fall upon us; if such Abominations should always go unpunished: And that 'tis high time that some more effectual Law should be provided, to curb these bold and insolent Defiers of Heaven, who take a pride in being Monsters, and boast themselves in the Follies and Deformities of Humane Nature. The Heathens would not suffer their Gods to be reviled, which yet were no Gods: And shall it, among the Professors of the true Religion, be allowed to any Man to affront Him that made Heaven and Earth, and to breath out Blasphemies against Him who gives us Life and Breath and all things?

IF GOD be consider'd as our common Benefactor, the Principles of Gratitude shou'd touch us with a Sense of the Base-

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ness of affronting him. But if we consider our own Interest, we can have but little reason to expect the continuance of his Favour, if we take no care to vindicate his Honour. For publick Bodies and Communities of Men, as such, can only be rewarded and punished in this World; because in the next all those publick Societies and Combinations, wherein Men are now linked together under several Governments, shall be dissolved. And therefore we find in Scripture frequent Declarations and Promises of temporal Happiness and Prosperity to a righteous Nation; but on the contrary, Threatnings of present Vengeance and Misery to a wicked People. Which are also confirmed by many Examples both in Sacred and profane Story. And tho' G O D may defer his Judgments for a Time, and give a People a longer Space of Repentance; tho' He may stay till the Iniquities of a Nation be full; yet sooner or latter they have Reason to expect his Vengeance: And usually the longer Punishment is delay'd, it is the heavier when it comes.

So that it highly concerns us to put a speedy Stop to the Profaness I am speaking of, as well in Care for our own Happiness, as from a religious Regard to the Majesty of G O D. And this the rather, because



cause it so evidently tends to the Subversion and Dissolution of Government, even tho' no extraordinary Judgments from God should fall upon us. For, as Divines well observe in their Dissuasives from common Swearing, the frequent Use of Oaths takes off the Reverence due to them; and disposes Men to swear upon the most solemn Occasions, without much Regard to the Truth either of *what they speak, or whereof they affirm*. For he that has made Oaths familiar to him, will be likely to take the dreadfullest Oath, without much Consideration or Reverence: And by this Means that which ought to be, and was always accounted, the strongest Bond of Society, becomes vile and disregarded. And then there can remain no good Security of Allegiance to the Sovereign Power, no certain Assurance of Trust and Fidelity between Man and Man. For this Reason therefore we justly account them the great Disturbers of the World, who go about by their pernicious Doctrines to evacuate these Obligations; such as teach, That *Faith is not to be kept with Hereticks*, or that *the Pope has Power to absolve Subjects from their Allegiance*, by *dispensing with Oaths* obliging them to it. And yet if we duly consider it, this profane Custom of common Swearing does as much tend to overthrow Government, as the Teaching of those Do-

Strines: Nay, it seems to be a surer and shorter Way of doing it; for by the common Practice of Swearing Men learn to value neither that, nor any other Oath; they consider not the Obligation that an Oath lays upon them, they easily dispense with themselves, without sending so far as to *Rome* for a formal Dispensation. And therefore one would think there should be no need of Arguments, to induce our Governors vigorously to exert themselves, in a Case whereon their own Safety seems so much to depend.

BUT it is not only the Sovereign Power, but every private Man that is in Danger of being a great Sufferer by this Practice, for when once Men have by frequent Use lost the Reverence that is due to an Oath, they easily become *Knights of the Post*, and may be hired to swear any Thing; so that to the Custom of vain Swearing may reasonably be ascribed, the rise of those many false Witnesses daily to be seen in our Courts of Justice. And when a false Witness shall swear with as great or greater Confidence than a true one, and 'tis many times impossible to discern his Knavery, how can it be otherwise, but that many times a poor innocent Man may be turn'd out of his Rights and Possessions, nay, perhaps be imprison'd or put to Death;  
only

only because his Adversary, by an habitual Profanation of G O D's Holy Name, is arrived to that Pitch of Impiety, that he can deliberately swear to an Untruth, without discovering any Mark of Shame, or the least Dread of that Majesty he invokes? What Assurance can any Man have of his Possessions, or of his Life, when any that have a mind to his Estate, or bear him Ill-will, are able, if they have but Confidence enough (a Qualification that common Swearers can hardly want) to turn him out of both? And yet there is no possible Way to prevent this Inconvenience, but by preserving the just Reverence of an Oath \*; by making it so criminal a Thing to swear at all upon common Occasions, that Men may not dare to offend.

As to what concerns the common Interests of Mankind, we see however, the Laws are for the most Part sufficient to secure them in the Possession of all their Rights and Privileges. They can enjoy their Estates, their good Names, their Lives, without any great Fear of Violence from their Neighbours: Or if any attack 'em, *the Law is open*, and they may have Recourse thereto for their Preservation and Security. This  
Refuge

Refuge has every private Man from Injury, no less than our Governors themselves: But it seems very hard, that GOD, the Supreme Lord and Governor of the World, should be the only Person in it liable to the Insults and Violence of evil Men; that his Deputies and Substitutes should under this Providence take Care of themselves, and the People committed to their Charge, but make it none of their Concern to vindicate the Honour of his Name.

'Tis true, the Ministers of the Gospel are allowed to plead their MASTER's Cause, and to warn Men of the Punishment which He has himself threatned to inflict on his rebellious Children in another Life: But they can do no more than Persuade; they cannot compel such as are Refractory to Obedience, by any Temporal Rewards or Punishments; For their *Weapons are not carnal*, but spiritual, and these of late in a manner wrested from them; the Sword of Justice is not in their Hands, and *the Terrors of the World to come* are in truth but as *vain Words*, to those that look no further than what is present, and reckon every Thing uncertain that is at a Distance: Which, it is to be feared, is too often the Case of those that profane the Name of GOD by rash Oaths and Curses.

So that the only effectual Way to reduce such Blasphemers to an Awe of the Divine MAJESTY, to make them *fear this Glorious and Fearful Name, the LORD our GOD*, seems to be the Fear of temporal Punishments. But it is not a little Thing that can make them afraid; It is not a small Fine of Twelve-pence an Oath, that shall abridge them of the Liberty of Defying their Maker at every Turn; the poorest among us don't seem to regard the Payment of one Shilling, so seldom as they are likely to be called to an Account, be they never so notorious for Cursing and Swearing: And for the Stocks, they can sit there very contentedly, and drink and swear till the Hour is out, the Scandal is nothing; and there are Few that will give themselves the Trouble to make fresh Complaints, only to obtain the Name and the Envy of Informers, when they see so little Good to be done upon the Offenders. And therefore we can never hope to see a Stop put to this growing Impiety, till our Legislators shall in their great Wisdom and Piety lay a greater Penalty upon those who so presumptuously defy Heaven; and also find out a more effectual Way to put the Laws, which they shall prudently make, in Execution.



THE Statute of King *William* was no doubt designed, according to it's Title, *For the more effectual suppressing profane Cursing and Swearing*; and is indeed an Improvement in some small Particulars of the Statute of King *James*; as in the Penalty laid on the Magistrate, *witfully and wittingly omitting the Performance of his Duty in the Execution of that Act*; and in the Difference made in the Quality of the Offenders against it, by laying a Forfeiture of *Two Shillings* on Persons of higher Rank, whereas inferiour Persons are to pay but *One*. But I am afraid those two Clauses serve but to very little Purpose; for it is almost as rare a Thing to hear of Offenders paying the Mulct according to their Quality, or the Number of their Offences, as it is to hear of a Magistrate making a Forfeiture for *wittingly omitting the Performance of his Duty*: And yet the *Swearing or Cursing in his Hearing*, is, by the exprefs Words of the *Act*, declared, a sufficient Reason for him to levy the Penalty upon the Party offending: So that if a Magistrate hear any one Curse or Swear, and do not punish him according to the Tenor of the *Act*, he must *wittingly omit the Performance of his Duty in the Execution of it*, and by Consequence is liable to the Penalty therein laid upon himself. Which I the rather mention, because I myself have known Magistrates seeking to evade their Duty, upon the poor Pretence of no Information being

given them, upon which they might legally proceed against the Offenders.

THIS indeed is a Fault in those that are to put the *Act* in Execution; but in another Instance, I am afraid the *Act* itself will be found more defective than that of King *James*, because the Punishment by which it is enforced is less: For the longest Time of *Sitting in the Stocks* by King *William's Act* is but *Two Hours*, and only *One* for any single Offence. Whereas every Offender against King *James's Act* for every Time so offending, is to be set in the Stocks by *Three whole Hours* \*. And I think lessening the Penalty, is but an odd Way of improving the Statute, a very unlikely Means of *Suppressing more effectually those detestable Sins of profane Cursing and Swearing*

So that there is plainly still wanting some more effectual Discouragement from those Sins than any which our Laws have yet provided. And whenever our Governors think fit to take this Want into Consideration, which I cannot think could ever be done too soon, for God's Honour and the publick Happiness; those good Ends, which, I am sure, you, Sir, are always ready and

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\* Compare the *Act* of *K. Will.* with that of *21 Jac. I.* cap. 20.

zealous to promote: It is humbly submitted to their great Wisdom and Goodness, Whether the following Particulars, if establish'd by their Authority, may not be likely to be of some Use towards the Suppressing that Inundation of Profaness and Blasphemy, which we have of late Years so much Reason to complain of.

1. THAT the Forfeiture for Cursing or Swearing be increased to such a Proportion, according to the Station and Degree of the Offenders, that they may feel the Weight of it. If instead of One Shilling, the Penalty for every Oath were Five or Ten, the lowest Rank of Offenders would find themselves under a Necessity of keeping that unruly Member their Tongue in a little better Subjection; as being unable to bear the Expence of Swearing: And many a Man who does not value the Payment of Twelvepence, would be loth to forfeit Five or Ten times as much, rather than reform and break himself of a Habit that brings him in neither Credit, Profit, nor Pleasure. And even those of better Condition, when the Penalty upon them comes to be doubled, must think it a ridiculous Thing to squander away their Mony by their unreasonable Obstinacy in a Vice which must End in the Ruin of their Souls, and which carries along with it no such present Satisfaction as may countervail

countervail the Charge of it, or make them any Amends for foolishly diminishing thereby their temporal Estate. But it may be, were the Mulct for Swearing increased, such as are guilty would chuse to suffer the corporal Punishment which the *Act* might inflict upon Non-payment of the Forfeiture : And therefore for the more effectually putting a Stop to the Crime, it may be worthy to be considered,

2. WHETHER it would not be proper to commute the Punishment of *Sitting in the Stocks* into a *Whipping*, or something that shall be painful to the Body as well as shameful ; which may strike a little Terror into those that are got above all Restraints of Shame, as those generally are that are most notoriously guilty of profane Cursing and Swearing. And I cannot but think such a Punishment would be more likely to produce the intended Effect, than so slight a Confinement as that of sitting at Ease, Drinking and Smoaking, or perhaps Cursing and Swearing, with a Company of Boys at play round them. We see that Boys can be tolerably kept in Awe by the Fear of Whipping ; And why should it not be as easy to govern those that are grown up by the same Fears, if they were liable to the same Punishment, to be inflicted with a Severity proportionable to the Demerits of their Offence ?

fence? The best Reason to be given why those of riper Years are commonly more wicked, and particularly more prone to the Profanation of God's Name, than Boys at School, is, I think, their being freed from such Discipline, and commonly left at large to the Conduct of their own corrupt Wills, without any Restraint from their Elders or Superiors. And therefore the making them liable, I do not mean to a Birchen-Rod, but to such a Whipping as the Laws in many other Cases inflict, for this Profaness, may be a probable Means of bringing them to know themselves, and to Reverence the Sacred Name of God, and to root out that horrible Profaness from amongst us, which we must otherwise expect will bring down the Vengeance of God upon our Heads. And tho' I before complain'd, That Boys are often heard profaning God's Name as bad as Persons grown up; yet this is: where there is no Care taken to restrain them by the Rod; where neither Parents nor Masters make it their Business to instruct them better, but perhaps give them an Example, which they are prone enough to take in this respect. And therefore this cannot be alledged as an Argument of the Improbability that such a Severity, if established by Law, would notwithstanding be insufficient for the Suppressing these *detestable Sins*.

HOWEVER



HOWEVER, I cannot but suggest upon this Occasion to the Wisdom of our Legislators,

3. THAT some Provision be made, for the more effectually obliging and enabling School-Masters and all Instructors of Youth, to be particularly careful of the Manners of those intrusted with them, by opposing the Beginnings as of every vicious Inclination, so more especially of Swearing, and the Proness to ill Words which they shall observe in the Boys under their Charge. I hope this Care is in a great Measure taken in our Charity-Schools, which have flourished so exceedingly of late Years, as to become the Envy of wicked Men. But there is I think an equal Necessity for the Governors and Masters of *Latin* and other Schools, to apply themselves with more than ordinary Care and Diligence to preserve our Youth from such Profaneness, and to bring them up to an Abhorrence of all such Language as makes them look like hellish Fiends, and is utterly unbecoming Gentlemen or Men of Letters.

I AM not insensible that there may be some Difficulty for Masters, especially in great Schools, (where the Danger of Boys learning ill Words is greatest) to be so well informed of the Language which they may use

use when out of Hearing, as to prevent it any further than Warning and Threatning will serve for that End. But as a proportionable Degree of Diligence and Application will surmount great Difficulties, so I am persuaded the Reverend and Learned Dr. F— and Dr. S—, and other eminent Masters of Schools, have so true a Zeal for GOD's Honour and the Happiness of their Country, particularly of those to whom they stand in so near a Relation; that they would be pleased to find a *British* Parliament seconding their private Endeavours to form the Manners of their Charge to Piety and Vertue, and to restrain them from all profane Language; and as readily concur with any new Method which the Wisdom of that Venerable Assembly may suggest, to make their general Care (wherein doubtless they are not wanting) more successful in this Respect. But still, let never so great Care be taken by those that have the Government and Instruction of Boys, it is to be feared that, when they come to be left to themselves, and are grown past the Discipline of a School, they'll be apt to be led away by the many bad Examples they are sure to meet with in the World, and to learn the Language which makes a Part of almost all Conversation, unless they can be restrain'd by some legal Discouragements that shall reach every Age and Order of Men. And therefore,

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4. As the Law now in Force against profane Swearing and Cursing, intended the Penalty therein laid upon the *Justice of Peace* or *chief Magistrate*, who should *willfully omit the Performance of his Duty* in relation thereto, as a Provision for the more effectually putting it in Execution; so, if I were permitted to put my Superiors in mind of what I should think more likely to conduce towards the Suppressing of those detestable Sins, I would humbly propose, That in any new Law which may be made for this End, the inferior Magistrates or Officers, such as Constables, Church-Wardens, &c. should be made liable to the same, or at least some proportionable Penalty and Forfeiture, with that laid on the *Justice of Peace* or *chief Magistrate*, if they should *willingly and wittingly omit the Performance of their Duty in the Execution of it*, i. e. if they should forbear to complain of, and punish those that should profanely Swear or Curse *in their Presence or Hearing*. And until some effectual Way be found out to put the Laws which our Governors piously make in Execution, there is little Benefit to be expected from them: But still I cannot dissemble my Fears, that while we delay to make such a Provision, God may think Himself concern'd in Justice to his own Honour, to take the Execution of his own Laws into his own Hands,  
and

and shower down upon us the Furiousness of his Wrath.

IN the mean Time I hope I may be allowed without Offence to put all in mind, into whose Hands this Letter may fall, of the indispensable Obligation that lies upon them, as far as their private Influence extends, to discountenance profane Cursing and Swearing, by their Example. If the Rich and Honourable, thinking themselves above the Restraint of Human Laws, should forget that they likewise *have a Master in Heaven*, and lay aside the Reverence due to his Name; tho' it is not for their Inferiors to bring them to temporal Punishment; yet as they must be Self-condemn'd for encouraging by their Practice that which they have by their own *Acts* forbidden, so they may be sure that they shall not escape the Judgment of GOD, *with whom there is no Respect of Persons*. And as they will unavoidably fall under the Reproach, of laying Restraints upon others, to which they will not submit themselves; so they will weaken the Power and Force of their own Laws. The Influence of great Mens Example is very wide and extensive: And as they have thereby an Advantage greatly to promote the Honour of GOD and Religion, when they are themselves piously disposed; so have they a fatal Advantage to become thereby instrumental to the lessening of  
 God's

God's Honour in the World, when they are not possess'd with a Reverence for his Name and Majesty. Nay, to use Archbishop *Tillotson's* Words, " The Eminence  
 " of their Rank and Quality renders their  
 " Examples so powerful, as to be able al-  
 " most to give Authority either to Virtue or  
 " Vice : People take their Fashions from  
 " them, as to the Habits of their Minds as  
 " well as their Bodies. So that upon them  
 " chiefly depends the Ruin and Reforma-  
 " tion of Manners, our Hopes or Despair  
 " of a better World."

If Parents and Masters, and all other Governors of private Families, would vigorously exert the Authority, which Nature and the Laws of the Land have invested them with ; we might hope quickly to see a great Amendment made among us, as to the Practice of profane Swearing and Cursing. But they are the *great* Men, who have it most in their Power to be the Restorers of Piety and Vertue to a degenerate Age. It is *our* Part indeed to exhort Men to their Duty ; but it is *they* that would be the most powerful and effectual Preachers of Righteousness. And unless they are pleased to second our Endeavours, we must in a great Measure fail of Success ; even the Laws themselves must lose much of their Force ;

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and



and as long as there are Any, that can plead *Privilege* for themselves, or their Servants and Dependents, to screen them from Justice, the most conscientious Magistrate will find himself, with all the Countenance that the Law can give him, unable *effectually to suppress profane Cursing and Swearing.*

I AM not so great a Stranger to the Good nature of the *English*, as not to know how averse they are from using Severity towards those that most deserve it: But in this Case, I think, it ought to be consider'd, that Lenity is in truth the greatest Cruelty, if not to the Bodies, yet (which is more) to the Souls of the Offenders. *St. Paul* thought it requisite that their *Mouths should be stopp'd*, who by their pernicious Doctrines *subvert whole Houses*: And how much more necessary is it to *stop* theirs, who by the profane Practise of Cursing and Swearing do what in them lies to *subvert whole Kingdoms*? However, this is humbly submitted to the Zeal and Piety of our Governors, whose Wisdom may suggest more proper Methods to be taken in this Case, than any here proposed. But if the Age be thought too loose and profligate, to bear any more severe Laws than are already provided against these detestable Sins; I shall at least have the Satisfaction of having publicly protested against those

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those Grievances and Impieties, which it  
is not in my Power, in my humble Station,  
to reform or to redress.

*I am, Honoured Sir,*

*Your most Obedient,*

*Harefield,*  
Nov. 4. 1719.

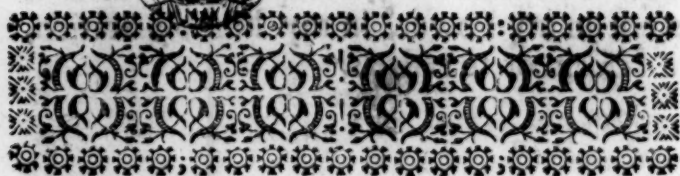
*Humble Servant,*

NATH. COLLIER.



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P O S T-



## P O S T S C R I P T.

**I** HOPE it will not be thought beside the Main End of the foregoing *Letter*, wherein I propose nothing so much as the Honour of GOD, and the Happiness of this Church and Nation, if I here take notice of another unseemly and wicked Practice, that seems to want Redress from our Legislative Authority.

EVERY One that lives within Twenty Miles of the City of *London*, must have observed, That a great Part of the Christian Sabbath is taken up with Butchers, Higglers, and others, in making Preparation for *Monday's* Market ; in so much, that nothing is more common than for that Sort of People to travel the Road with Carts, Calves, Lambs, &c. and to be fetching from the neighbouring Villages the Things wherein their Dealing lies, even before the Conclusion of the Afternoon Public-Service of the Church ; as those prudent Gentlemen, who chuse to travel on  
*Sundays*

*Sundays* for the Convenience of passing without Molestation from Waggoners, Drivers, &c. can bear Witness. And tho' this Custom be strictly and expressly forbidden by that Excellent Act of Parliament made *Anno 29. Car. II. Cap. 7.* which plainly shews the Sense of our Legislature in this Matter; yet it is pretended by those who are thus employed, That the Market cannot otherwise be supply'd; and therefore that the Necessity of the Case must be its Excuse. And for this Reason methinks, it should not be thought unworthy the Wisdom and Care of our Superiors, to remove the Occasion of Profaning the *Lord's-Day*, by altering the Market, for which these Men say, they are under a Necessity of providing, to *Tuesday*, the Day following that on which it is now kept; if, as I cannot but think, it may be done without bringing any such great Inconvenience to the City, as will justify the whole Country round them for breaking that Law of God and Act of Parliament which require them to keep holy the Sabbath-Day. For I believe no Man can give any tolerable Reason, fit for Publick Consideration, Why *Tuesday* and *Friday* will not answer the Ends of the Market as well as *Monday* and *Friday*; since the Distance between the Two Days is equal, tho' it be not the same. And methinks,  
the

the giving Servants, Apprentices, and others, whose Livelihood depends upon the Market, (who it is to be hoped would be glad to serve God more strictly on His Day, if they might) leisure from their worldly Business, that so they may attend on the religious Duties of the Day, both in Publick and Private, without Distraction; is not a Consideration of so little Moment, as that it should be over-look'd by those in whom the Power of making such an Alteration is lodged.

I DON'T question but the Government had an Eye to the Strictness of the Sabbath-Day's Rest, when they provided that no Post should come into, or go out of *London* on that Day; consulting the Honour of Religion in the Metropolis, where the common Benefit makes it necessary to depart from that Strictness in other Places. But I cannot see, why they should not equally consult the Honour of Religion in the Case I am speaking of; since there does not appear any Necessity that can excuse our departing from the same Strictness. For tho' it redounds very much to the Honour of our Nation, that our Laws both Ecclesiastical and Civil require us to observe the *Lord's-Day* with a much greater Strictness, than is done either in Popish or Protestant Countries Abroad:  
yet



yet we shall not have whereof to glory in this Respect before Men, much less before G O D, unless our Practice correspond with our Obligations.

T H E *Jews* were so far from making their *Sabbath* a Preparation-Day for worldly Business, that they had a *Preparation-Day before the Sabbath*; that they might be the better compos'd for the Duties of that Holy Day. And tho' their Laws do not oblige us, yet I cannot conceive it any Part of our Christian Liberty to observe our *Sabbath* itself with less Piety, or indeed less Ceremony, than the *Jews* did the Day before theirs. Which being a Matter, as I apprehend, proper to be consider'd by Christian Lawgivers, I hope I shall be excus'd for adding this short Hint to my Superiors; who have it in their Power to rescue the *Lord's-Day* from Profanation, and such as are desirous to spend it better, from the Necessity that hinders them.

N. C.





Printed for R. KNAPLOCK, at the Bishop's-Head in St. Paul's Church-yard.



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